

## **Notices regarding the solicitation “Forensic Technology Center of Excellence”**

March 8, 2016: The language regarding supplemental funding on page 7 was modified.

March 2, 2016: This solicitation was modified to indicate the expectation that NIJ may provide supplemental funding for up to four years under this program.

March 1, 2016: Answers to questions have been posted. To assist applicants in completing their proposals, NIJ has made the answers to questions received available for this funding opportunity. Visit <http://nij.gov/funding/pages/solicitation-qa.aspx#NIJ-2016-9087> for questions and answers to help prepare your application.

The original solicitation document begins on the next page.



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The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [National Institute of Justice](#) (NIJ) is seeking applications for funding a Forensic Technology Center of Excellence (FTCOE). The FTCOE will provide testing, evaluation, technology assistance, and other services with regard to technologies intended for use by crime laboratories, forensic service providers (supporting criminal justice applications), law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies to combat crime. This program furthers the Department's mission by improving the safety and effectiveness of criminal justice technology and providing better access to this technology for law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies.

## Forensic Technology Center of Excellence

**Applications Due: May 2, 2016**

### Eligibility

In general, NIJ is authorized to make grants to, or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, States (including territories), units of local government, federally recognized Indian tribal governments (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior) that perform law enforcement functions, non-profit and for-profit organizations (including tribal non-profit and for-profit organizations), institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), and certain qualified individuals. For-profit organizations must agree to forgo any profit or management fee. Foreign governments, foreign organizations, and foreign institutions of higher education are not eligible to apply.

NIJ welcomes applications that involve two or more entities, however, one eligible entity must be the applicant and the other(s) must be proposed as subrecipient(s). The applicant must be the entity with primary responsibility for conducting and leading the FTCOE program. If successful, the applicant will be responsible for monitoring and appropriately managing any subrecipients or, as applicable, for administering any procurement subcontracts that would receive federal program funds from the applicant under the award.

An eligible applicant may submit more than one application, as long as each application proposes a different project in response to the solicitation. (Applicants should also review and consider the "Duplicate Applications" note under [How to Apply](#) in Section D. Application and Submission Information.) Subrecipients may be part of multiple proposals.

NIJ may elect to make awards for applications submitted under this solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

For additional eligibility information, see [Section C. Eligibility Information](#).

### Deadline

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](#) prior to submitting an application. All applications are due to be submitted and in receipt of a successful validation message in Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on May 2, 2016.

All applicants are encouraged to read this: [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#).

For additional application information, see [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

## Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035, or via email to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The [Grants.gov](http://grants.gov) Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must email the NIJ contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. Additional information on reporting technical issues is found under "Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues" in the [How to Apply](#) section.

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll-free at 1-800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only); email [grants@ncjrs.gov](mailto:grants@ncjrs.gov); fax to 301-240-5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>. The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date. General information on applying for NIJ awards can be found at [www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx](http://www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx). Answers to frequently asked questions that may assist applicants are posted at [www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/faqs.aspx](http://www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/faqs.aspx).

Grants.gov number assigned to this announcement: NIJ-2016-9087

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## Contents

A. Program Description .....	4
Overview .....	4
Program-Specific Information .....	4
Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products .....	5
B. Federal Award Information .....	7
Type of Award .....	7
Financial Management and System of Internal Controls.....	8
Budget Information .....	8
Cost Sharing or Match Requirement .....	9
Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals.....	9
Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver .....	9
Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs .....	10
Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable) .....	10
C. Eligibility Information .....	10
Limit on Number of Application Submissions .....	10
D. Application and Submission Information .....	10
What an Application Should Include.....	10
How to Apply .....	23
E. Application Review Information .....	26
Selection Criteria .....	26
Review Process.....	27
F. Federal Award Administration Information.....	28
Federal Award Notices .....	28
Administrative, National Policy, and other Legal Requirements.....	29
General Information About Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements.....	30
G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s) .....	30
H. Other Information .....	31
Provide Feedback to OJP .....	31
Application Checklist .....	32

# Forensic Technology Center of Excellence

(CFDA No. 16.560)

## A. Program Description

### Overview

With this solicitation, NIJ seeks proposals from qualified applicants to establish and operate a Forensic Technology Center of Excellence (FTCOE) to support NIJ's research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) process in all areas of forensic science. The FTCOE should focus on specific efforts to include, but are not limited to:

1. Providing scientific and technical support to NIJ's research and development efforts.
2. Facilitating demonstration, transfer, and adoption of appropriate technology into practice by crime laboratories, forensic science service providers, law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies.
3. Providing technology assistance, information, and support to law enforcement and other appropriate criminal justice agencies.
4. Developing and providing access to resources for research, education, and best practices in the forensic science and criminal justice community.
5. Working closely with NIJ's social science staff to assess and communicate the impact of forensic science on the criminal justice system.

**Authorizing Legislation:** Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (sections 201 and 202); the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (sections 231-233, 235); and 28 U.S.C. 530C.

### Program-Specific Information

NIJ is the federal government's lead agency for forensic science research and development and the administration of programs that improve laboratory efficiency and reduce backlogs. The mission of NIJ's Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences (OIFS) is to improve the quality and practice of forensic science through innovative solutions that support research and development, testing and evaluation, technology, information exchange, and the development of resources for the criminal justice community.

Forensic science is a multidisciplinary field that incorporates the investigation, analysis, prevention, and prosecution of crime involving not only crimes against persons, but also property crimes. It moreover involves the methods and tools for collecting, preserving, and examining evidence and the related educational/training programs that build capacity within criminal justice agencies to address forensic science and its use. The FTCOE will coordinate and facilitate NIJ projects and programs in these fields in order to leverage resources and provide comprehensive forensic technology support to State and local criminal justice agencies. Through these efforts, the FTCOE will increase the capabilities of State and local law

enforcement to effectively and professionally serve the public in matters involving forensic science and crime.

Ideally, the FTCOE should have established collaborations with agencies including, but not limited to, institutions of higher learning, agencies performing forensic science research, and public forensic science laboratories.

**Note:** For the purposes of this solicitation, higher education institutions are defined as colleges, universities, and community colleges which are accredited by a higher education accreditation organization. Proposals will be strengthened by collaborations with institutions that have additionally obtained accreditation from the Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC).

As part of the program proposal, the FTCOE should designate a director who has the knowledge, skills, abilities, and vision to lead their team; and should have an internal management structure capable of supporting the research, development, evaluation, education, and outreach missions of the FTCOE and the community.

### **Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products**

The goal of establishing a FTCOE is to support forensic science RDT&E. The FTCOE and its partners will use their capabilities and expertise to develop and advance forensic science through, but not limited to, the following objectives and activities:

- **Providing scientific and technical support to NIJ's research and development efforts.** The FTCOE will facilitate and support NIJ's Forensic Science Technology Working Group activities and other efforts focused on gathering researcher and practitioner perspectives regarding the needs of crime laboratories, forensic service providers (supporting criminal justice applications), law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies. In supporting these efforts, the FTCOE will, in close coordination with the relevant NIJ scientists, identify key agencies, professional organizations, and individual researchers and practitioners that should participate, as well as provide administrative and logistical support for meetings.

The FTCOE is expected to help NIJ scientists define program objectives, assess ongoing research and development projects, find relevant technology efforts for NIJ collaboration, and participate in national and regional groups that support the adoption of technology as needed.

The FTCOE will also be expected to conduct relevant, focused studies to support program development, and participate in technical conferences and symposia. The FTCOE will provide general logistical support for the conferences and symposia. The FTCOE is expected to capture and disseminate technology needs, including assessment metrics for each identified gap, to all relevant stakeholders.

- **Facilitating demonstration, transfer, and adoption of appropriate technology into practice by crime laboratories, forensic science providers, law enforcement, and other criminal justice agencies.** The FTCOE will facilitate the effective transfer into practice of new tools and technologies, including those funded by NIJ and others. Efforts are to include introducing new tools and technologies to practitioners, introducing practitioner requirements to developers, and assisting developers in the

commercialization of their products. Demonstrations must be designed to determine whether a technology meets all of the assessment criteria for a technology need area and develop guidelines for the adoption of the technology by other practitioners. To the greatest extent feasible, demonstrations should also be designed to determine criminal justice outcomes through evaluation research in collaboration with NIJ scientists and with NIJ's Office of Research and Evaluation. Findings will be disseminated through reports, conferences, best practices, and technology assistance activities.

- **Providing technology assistance, information, and support to law enforcement and other appropriate criminal justice agencies.** The FTCOE is expected to provide specialized technology assistance. These efforts may include providing support to assist first-adopter law enforcement, crime laboratories, forensic service providers, and other criminal justice agencies with the use of new technologies or the adaptation of existing technologies to enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and safety. The FTCOE will provide national expertise for the criminal justice community's ongoing efforts to continuously improve operations through the adoption of new tools and methods. **(Note:** The FTCOE will not fund or provide assistance to agencies that are adopting technologies that are well established in practice.) Appropriate assistance will be provided to all facets of the criminal justice community, including small and rural law enforcement, corrections, forensic service providers, school resource officers, or other State and local practitioner communities.
- **Developing and providing access to resources for research, education, and best practices in the forensic science and criminal justice community.** FTCOE efforts should include the development of evidence-based guides or best practices for crime laboratories, forensic science practitioners, law enforcement, and other appropriate criminal justice practitioners based on sound research and development and science. Topics for guides may be discussed with NIJ and initiated with its approval.
- **Working closely with NIJ's Social Science staff to assess and communicate the impact of forensic science on the criminal justice system.** NIJ has made significant investments in social science research on forensic science and is interested in assessing the impact of past research (both NIJ-funded and non-NIJ-funded) on the criminal justice system and the development of recommendations for improving the impact of such research. There have been studies by NIJ<sup>1</sup> and others that look at the costs of various forensic analytical procedures applied to physical evidence and issues related to the cost-effectiveness of forensic evidence in criminal investigations. NIJ is interested in cataloging, synthesizing, and possibly conducting a meta-analysis of cost-benefit analyses related to forensic science. Also, the FTCOE will be asked to assist in the facilitation of knowledge transfer from NIJ's social science research on forensic science portfolio to crime laboratories and other criminal justice agencies. More information on this initiative can be found here: <http://www.nij.gov/journals/275/Pages/social-science-forensics.aspx>.

The FTCOE should expect that the majority of its work will be on projects specifically defined by NIJ in support of specific technology investment portfolio areas. For this reason and others (such as the possibility of establishment, modification, or elimination of particular technology investment portfolios by NIJ; changes in the availability of funds; or the desire to capitalize on technology opportunities), applicants should expect that the level of effort may vary significantly

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.nij.gov/journals/275/Pages/social-science-forensics.aspx>.

during the project period (or from year-to-year, should supplemental funding be made available). The successful applicant therefore must demonstrate the ability to add or reduce capacity in relevant areas without adversely affecting the ability to provide services or incurring unacceptable additional costs. In this connection, NIJ is very interested in entertaining applications that propose to leverage existing programs, facilities, and personnel.

## **B. Federal Award Information**

NIJ estimates that up to a total of \$5,000,000 may become available for one (1) award made through this solicitation. NIJ may, in certain cases, provide supplemental funding in future years to awards under its research, development, and evaluation solicitations. Subject to the availability of future funds, NIJ expects that it may provide supplemental funding between \$3 million and \$6 million on an annual basis for up to four years. NIJ cannot guarantee, however, that any such supplements will be funded. Important considerations in decisions regarding supplemental funding include, among other factors, the availability of funding, strategic priorities, NIJ's assessment of the quality of the management of the award (for example, timeliness and quality of progress reports), and NIJ's assessment of the progress of the work funded under the award.

To allow time for, among other things, any necessary post-award review, modification, and clearance by OJP of the proposed budget, applicants should propose an award start date of January 1, 2017.

If the applicant is proposing a project that reasonably could be conducted in discrete phases, with each phase resulting in completion of one or more significant, defined milestones, then NIJ strongly recommends that the applicant structure the application—specifically including the narrative, timelines/milestones, and budget detail worksheet and budget narrative—to clearly set out each phase. (This is particularly the case if the applicant proposes a project that will exceed—in cost or length of project period—the amount or length anticipated for an individual award (or awards) under this solicitation.) Given limitations on the availability to NIJ of funds for research, development, and evaluation awards, this information will assist NIJ in considering whether partial funding of proposals that would not receive full funding would be productive.

**All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.**

### **Type of Award<sup>2</sup>**

NIJ expects that it will make any award from this solicitation in the form of a cooperative agreement, which is a particular type of grant used if NIJ expects to have ongoing substantial involvement in award activities. Substantial involvement includes direct oversight and involvement with the grantee organization in implementation of the grant, but does not involve day-to-day project management. See [Administrative, National Policy, and other Legal Requirements](#), under [Section F. Federal Award Administration Information](#), for details regarding the federal involvement anticipated under an award from this solicitation.

As discussed [later in the solicitation](#), important rules (including limitations) apply to any conference/meeting/training costs under cooperative agreements.

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<sup>2</sup> See generally 31 U.S.C. §§ 6301-6305 (defines and describes various forms of federal assistance relationships, including grants and cooperative agreements [a type of grant]).

**Please note:** Any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to comply with Department of Justice regulations on confidentiality and human subjects' protection. See "Evidence, Research, and Evaluation Guidance and Requirements" under "Solicitation Requirements" in [OJP's Funding Resource Center](#).

## **Financial Management and System of Internal Controls**

Award recipients and subrecipients (including any recipient or subrecipient funded in response to this solicitation that is a pass-through entity<sup>3</sup>) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303:

- (a) Establish and maintain effective internal control over the federal award that provides reasonable assurance that the recipient (and any subrecipient) is managing the federal award in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal award. These internal controls should be in compliance with guidance in "Standards for Internal Control in the federal Government" issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the "Internal Control Integrated Framework", issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO).
- (b) Comply with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal awards.
- (c) Evaluate and monitor the recipient's (and any subrecipient's) compliance with statutes, regulations and the terms and conditions of federal awards.
- (d) Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings.
- (e) Take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other information the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity designates as sensitive or the recipient (or any subrecipient) considers sensitive consistent with applicable federal, State, local, and tribal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

In order to better understand administrative requirements and cost principles, applicants are encouraged to enroll, at no charge, in the Department of Justice Grants Financial Management Online Training available [here](#).

## **Budget Information**

### **What will not be funded:**

- Proposals primarily to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies. (A budget may include these items if they are necessary to conduct research, development, demonstration, evaluation, or analysis.)
- Work that will be funded under another similar solicitation.

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<sup>3</sup> For purposes of this solicitation (or program announcement), "pass-through entity" includes any entity eligible to receive funding as a recipient or subrecipient under this solicitation (or program announcement) that, if funded, may make a subaward(s) to a subrecipient(s) to carry out part of the funded program.

- Proposals that are not responsive to this specific solicitation.
- Applications that do not demonstrate the capability to perform the work proposed.
- Applications that propose the execution of research and development.

### **Cost Sharing or Match Requirement**

See “Cofunding” paragraph under item 4 (“Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative”) under [What an Application Should Include](#) in Section D. Application and Submission Information.

### **Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

Pre-agreement costs are costs incurred by the applicant prior to the start date of the period of performance of the grant award.

OJP does not typically approve pre-agreement costs; an applicant must request and obtain the prior written approval of OJP for all such costs. If approved, pre-agreement costs could be paid from grant funds consistent with a grantee’s approved budget, and under applicable cost standards. However, all such costs prior to award and prior to approval of the costs are incurred at the sole risk of an applicant. Generally, no applicant should incur project costs *before* submitting an application requesting federal funding for those costs. Should there be extenuating circumstances that appear to be appropriate for OJP’s consideration as pre-agreement costs, the applicant should contact the point of contact listed on the title page of this announcement for details on the requirements for submitting a written request for approval. See the section on [Costs Requiring Prior Approval](#) in the [Financial Guide](#), for more information.

### **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver**

With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, recipients may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the award recipient at a rate that exceeds 110% of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the Federal Government’s Senior Executive Service (SES) at an agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year.<sup>4</sup> The 2016 salary table for SES employees is available at the Office of Personnel Management [website](#). Note: A recipient may compensate an employee at a greater rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds. (Any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds where match requirements apply.) For employees who charge only a portion of their time to an award, the allowable amount to be charged is equal to the percentage of time worked times the maximum salary limitation.

The Director of the National Institute of Justice may exercise discretion to waive, on an individual basis, the limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award. An applicant requesting a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative of the application. Unless the applicant submits a waiver request and justification with the application,

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<sup>4</sup> This limitation on use of award funds does not apply to the non-profit organizations specifically named at Appendix VIII to 2 C.F.R. part 200.

the applicant should anticipate that OJP will request the applicant to adjust and resubmit the budget.

The justification should include the particular qualifications and expertise of the individual, the uniqueness of the service the individual will provide, the individual's specific knowledge of the program or project being undertaken with award funds, and a statement explaining that the individual's salary is commensurate with the regular and customary rate for an individual with his/her qualifications and expertise, and for the work to be done.

### **Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs**

OJP strongly encourages applicants that propose to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity to review carefully—before submitting an application—the OJP policy and guidance on “conference” approval, planning, and reporting available at <http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm>. OJP policy and guidance (1) encourage minimization of conference, meeting, and training costs; (2) require prior written approval (which may affect project timelines) of most such costs for cooperative agreement recipients and of some such costs for grant recipients; and (3) set cost limits, including a general prohibition of all food and beverage costs.

### **Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)**

If an applicant proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to individuals, the costs of taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to those services or benefits for individuals with limited English proficiency may be allowable. Reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services or benefits may include interpretation or translation services where appropriate.

For additional information, see the "Civil Rights Compliance" section under “Solicitation Requirements” in [OJP's Funding Resource Center](#).

## **C. Eligibility Information**

For additional eligibility information, see title page.

For additional information on cost sharing or matching requirements, see [Section B. Federal Award Information](#).

### **Limit on Number of Application Submissions**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, NIJ will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. For more information on system-validated versions, see [How to Apply](#).

## **D. Application and Submission Information**

### **What an Application Should Include**

Applicants should anticipate that if they fail to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may affect negatively the review of their application; and, should a

decision be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of special conditions that preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds pending satisfaction of the conditions.

Moreover, applicants should anticipate that applications determined to be nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, or that do not include the application elements that NIJ has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration. Under this solicitation, NIJ has designated the following application elements as critical: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet, Budget Narrative, and resumes/curriculum vitae of key personnel. For purposes of this solicitation, “key personnel” means the principal investigator, and any and all co-principal investigators. Please review the “Note on File Names and File Types” under [How to Apply](#) to be sure applications are submitted in permitted formats.

OJP strongly recommends that applicants use appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., “Program Narrative,” “Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative,” “Timelines,” “Memoranda of Understanding,” “Résumés”) for all attachments. Also, OJP recommends that applicants include résumés in a single file.

## 1. Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. Grants.gov and OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS) take information from the applicant’s profile to populate the fields on this form. When selecting “type of applicant,” if the applicant is a for-profit entity, select “For-Profit Organization” or “Small Business” (as applicable).

**Intergovernmental Review:** This funding opportunity (program) **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). (In completing the SF-424, applicants are to make the appropriate selection in response to question 19 to indicate that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.”)

## 2. Project Abstract

The project abstract is a very important part of the application, and serves as an introduction to the proposed project. NIJ uses the project abstract for a number of purposes, including assignment of the application to an appropriate review panel. If the application is funded, the project abstract typically will become public information and be used to describe the project.

Applications should include a high-quality project abstract that summarizes the proposed project in 500-700 words. Project abstracts should be —

- Written for a general public audience.
- Submitted as a separate attachment with “Project Abstract” as part of its file name.
- Single-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman) with 1-inch margins.

As a separate attachment, the project abstract will **not** count against the page limit for the program narrative.

Project abstracts should follow the detailed template (including the detailed instructions as to content) available at [www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-abstract-template.pdf](http://www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-abstract-template.pdf).

### 3. Program Narrative

The program narrative section of the application should not exceed 25 pages double-spaced in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. If included in the main body of the program narrative, tables, charts, figures, and other illustrations count toward the 25-page limit for the narrative section. The project abstract, table of contents, appendices, and government forms do not count toward the 25-page limit.

If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, NIJ may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative.<sup>5</sup>

#### Program Narrative Guidelines:

**a. Title Page** (not counted against the 25-page program narrative limit).

The title page should include the title of the project, submission date, funding opportunity number, and the name and complete contact information (that is, address, telephone number, and e-mail address) for both the applicant organization and the principal investigator.

**b. Resubmit Response** (if applicable) (not counted against the 25-page program narrative limit).

If an applicant is resubmitting a proposal presented previously to NIJ, but not funded, the applicant should indicate this. A statement should be provided, no more than two pages, addressing: (1) the title, submission date, and NIJ-assigned application number of the previous proposal, and (2) a brief summary of revisions to the proposal, including responses to previous feedback received from NIJ.

**c. Table of Contents and Figures** (not counted against the 25-page program narrative limit).

**d. Main Body.**

The main body of the program narrative should describe the proposed project in depth. The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative:

- Statement of the Problem.

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<sup>5</sup> As noted earlier, if the proposed program or project reasonably could be conducted in discrete phases, with each phase resulting in completion of one or more significant, defined milestones, then NIJ strongly recommends that the applicant structure the application – specifically including the narrative, expected scholarly products, timelines/milestones, and budget detail worksheet and budget narrative – to set out each phase clearly. (In appropriate cases, the expected scholarly product(s) from a particular phase may vary from those described above.) See generally, “Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products” under “Program-Specific Information,” above.

- Project Design and Implementation.
- Potential Impact.
- Capabilities/Competencies.

Within these sections, the narrative should address:

- Purpose, goals, and objectives.
- Review of relevant literature.
- Implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.
- Management plan and organization.
- Plan for Dissemination to Broader Audiences (if applicable to the proposed project). Applicants should identify plans (if any) to produce or to make available to broader interested audiences – such as criminal/juvenile justice practitioners or policymakers.

**e. Performance Measures**

To demonstrate program progress and success, as well as, to assist the Department with fulfilling its responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, Public Law 111–352, applicants that receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measure the results of their work done under this solicitation. OJP will require any award recipient, post award, to provide the data requested in the “Data Grantee Provides” column so that OJP can calculate values for the “Performance Measures” column. (Submission of performance measures data is not required for the application.) Performance measures for this solicitation are as follows:

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Performance Measure(s)</b>	<b>Data Grantee Provides</b>
To provide scientific and technical support to NIJ’s research and development efforts.	Number of agencies/organizations represented at meetings.	Number of agencies/organizations represented at the technology working group meetings.
	Number of events supported.	Number of events, including workshops, conferences, and symposia supported.

	<p>Percent of deliverables completed on time.</p> <p>Percent of deliverables completed that meet expectations.</p>	<p>Provide technology needs and assessment metrics for identified gaps as identified from the working group activities, studies, and other efforts focused on the needs of crime laboratories.</p> <p>Provide scholarly products such as public reports that reflect findings and information about FTCoE projects, to include but not limited to best practices, landscape reports to assess technology, proceedings from workshops, etc.</p> <p>If applicable, each data set that resulted in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award.</p>
	<p>Quality of the management as measured by whether significant interim project milestones were achieved, final deadlines were met and costs remained within approved limits.</p> <p>Relevance to the needs of the field as measured by whether the project's substantive scope did not deviate from the funded proposal or any subsequent agency-approved modifications to the scope.</p>	<p>Individual project reports detailing the FTCoE's activities including the activities conducted.</p> <p>Semi-annual progress reports highlighting all activities conducted in the previous 6 month period, planned activity for the future, status of all planned projects, whether or not the objectives are being met, and a comprehensive listing of all work products such as scholarly products, evaluations, and fielded technologies.</p> <p>Quarterly financial reports, semi-annual and final progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements of the work performed under the NIJ award.</p>
To facilitate demonstration, transfer, and adoption of appropriate technology into practice by crime laboratories, forensic service providers, and law enforcement, and other criminal justice agencies.	<p>Increase stakeholder coordination through effective tool and technology transfer.</p> <p>Number of products evaluated.</p>	<p>Facilitate the effective transfer of new tools and technologies as identified in the objectives and activities.</p> <p>Description of all products evaluated.</p>
	<p>Number of materials disseminated.</p>	<p>Provide the criminal justice outcomes and findings that were disseminated through reports, conference, best practices, and technology assistance activities.</p>
To provide technology assistance, information, and support to law	<p>Number of agencies/organizations that apply for certification as a result of technical assistance.</p>	<p>Number of agencies/organizations that apply for certification as a result of technical assistance.</p>

enforcement and other appropriate criminal justice agencies.	Number of agencies/organizations brought into compliance as a result of technical assistance.	Number of agencies/organizations brought into compliance as a result of technical assistance.
	Number of technical assistance events/activities conducted.	Number of technical assistance events/activities conducted.
	Number of training and technical assistance recipients who implemented one or more policies or practices.	Number of training and technical assistance recipients who implemented one or more policies or practices.
	Percent of technical assistance requests completed.	Number of technical assistance requests completed.  Number of technical assistance requests received.
To develop and provide access to resources for research, education, and best practices in the forensic science and criminal justice community.	Number of documents published (if applicable).	Number of NIJ final grant reports, NIJ research documents and grantee research documents published.
	Number of agencies/organizations receiving and sharing information.	Number of agencies/organizations receiving and sharing information from NIJ's social science research on forensic science to crime laboratories and other criminal justice agencies.
To develop and implement strategic plans to evaluate the impact of NIJ's forensic science investments on the criminal justice system.	Number of materials developed.	Provide the materials developed for cost benefit analyses related to forensic science.

**f. Appendices** (not counted against the 25-page program narrative limit) include:

- Bibliography/references.
- Any tools/instruments, questionnaires, tables/charts/graphs, or maps pertaining to the proposed project that are supplemental to such items included in the main body of the narrative.

- Curriculum vitae or resumes of the principal investigator and any and all co-principal investigators. In addition, curriculum vitae, resumes, or biographical sketches of all other individuals (regardless of “investigator” status) who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposal (including, for example, individuals such as statisticians serving as consultants to conduct proposed data analysis).
- List (to the extent known) of all proposed project staff members, including those affiliated with the applicant organization or any proposed subrecipient organization(s), any proposed consultant(s) and contractors (whether individuals or organizations), and any proposed members of an advisory board for the project (if applicable). The list should include, for each individual and organization: name, title (if applicable), employer or other organizational affiliation, and roles and responsibilities proposed for the project. Applicants should use the “Proposed Project Staff, Affiliation, and Roles” form available at [www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-staff-template.xlsx](http://www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-staff-template.xlsx) to provide this listing.
- Proposed project timeline and expected milestones.
- Human Subjects Protection paperwork (documentation and forms related to Institutional Review Board (IRB) review).  
(See [nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/Pages/welcome.aspx](http://nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/Pages/welcome.aspx)) NOTE: Final IRB approval is not required at the time an application is submitted.
- Privacy Certificate (for further guidance go to [nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/pages/confidentiality.aspx](http://nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/pages/confidentiality.aspx)).
- List of any previous and current NIJ awards to applicant organization and investigator(s), including the NIJ-assigned award numbers.
- Letters of cooperation/support or administrative agreements from organizations collaborating in the project, such as law enforcement and correctional agencies (if applicable).
- List of other agencies, organizations, or funding sources to which this proposal has been submitted (if applicable).
- Data archiving plan. Applicants should anticipate that NIJ will require (through special award conditions, including a partial withholding of award funds) that data sets resulting in whole or in part from projects funded under this solicitation be submitted for archiving with the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) (see [www.nij.gov/funding/data-resources-program/applying/Pages/data-archiving-strategies.aspx](http://www.nij.gov/funding/data-resources-program/applying/Pages/data-archiving-strategies.aspx)).

Applications should include as an appendix a brief plan – labeled “Data Archiving Plan” – to comply with data archiving requirements. The plan should provide brief details about proposed data management and archiving, including submission to NIJ (through NACJD) of **all files and documentation** necessary to allow for future efforts by others to reproduce the project’s

findings and/or to extend the scientific value of the data set through secondary analysis. Pertinent files and documentation include, among other things, qualitative and quantitative data produced, instrumentation and data collection forms, codebook(s), any specialized programming code necessary to reproduce all constructed measures and the original data analysis, description of necessary de-identification procedures, and (when required) a copy of the privacy certificate and informed consent protocols.

The plan should be one or two pages in length and include the level of effort associated with meeting archiving requirements.

Note that required data sets are to be submitted 90 days before the end of the project period.

#### **4. Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative**

##### **a. Budget Detail Worksheet**

A sample Budget Detail Worksheet can be found at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf). Applicants that submit their budget in a different format should include the budget categories listed in the sample budget worksheet. (Work associated with satisfying data archiving requirements should be reflected.) NIJ expects applicants to provide a thorough narrative to each section of the Budget Detail Worksheet. The Budget Detail Worksheet should be broken down by year.

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the Financial Guide at <http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm>.

##### **b. Budget Narrative**

The budget narrative should thoroughly and clearly describe every category of expense listed in the Budget Detail Worksheet. OJP expects proposed budgets to be complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

Applicants should demonstrate in their budget narratives how they will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should generally describe cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project. For example, a budget narrative should detail why planned in-person meetings are necessary, or how technology and collaboration with outside organizations could be used to reduce costs, without compromising quality.

The narrative should be sound mathematically, and correspond with the information and figures provided in the Budget Detail Worksheet. The narrative should explain how the applicant estimated and calculated all costs, and how they are relevant to the completion of the proposed project. The narrative may include tables for clarification purposes but need not be in a spreadsheet format. As with the Budget Detail Worksheet, the Budget Narrative should be broken down by year.

### **c. Cofunding**

An award made by NIJ under this solicitation may account for up to 100 percent of the total cost of the project. The application should indicate whether it is feasible for the applicant to contribute cash, facilities, or services as non-federal support for the project. The application should identify generally any such contributions that the applicant expects to make and the proposed budget should indicate in detail which items, if any, will be supported with non-federal contributions.

For additional match information, see the [Cost Sharing or Match Requirement](#) section under [Section B. Federal Award Information](#).

If a successful application proposes a voluntary match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.

### **d. Non-Competitive Procurement Contracts In Excess of Simplified Acquisition Threshold**

If an applicant proposes to make one or more non-competitive procurements of products or services, where the non-competitive procurement will exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (also known as the small purchase threshold), which is currently set at \$150,000, the application should address the considerations outlined in the [Financial Guide](#).

### **e. Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

For information on pre-agreement costs approvals, see [Section B. Federal Award Information](#).

## **5. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)**

Indirect costs are allowed only under the following circumstances:

- (a) The applicant has a current, federally approved indirect cost rate; or
- (b) The applicant is eligible to use and elects to use the “de minimis” indirect cost rate described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.414(f).

Attach a copy of the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement to the application. Applicants that do not have an approved rate may request one through their cognizant federal agency, which will review all documentation and approve a rate for the applicant organization, or, if the applicant’s accounting system permits, costs may be allocated in the direct cost categories. For the definition of Cognizant Federal Agency, see the “Glossary of Terms” in the [Financial Guide](#). For assistance with identifying your cognizant agency, please contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786 or at [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov). If DOJ is the cognizant federal agency, applicants may obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf).

In order to use the “de minimis” indirect rate, attach written documentation to the application that advises OJP of both the applicant’s eligibility (to use the “de minimis” rate) and its election. If the applicant elects the “de minimis” method, costs must be consistently charged

as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. In addition, if this method is chosen then it must be used consistently for all federal awards until such time as you choose to negotiate a federally approved indirect cost rate.<sup>6</sup>

## **6. Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)**

Tribes, tribal organizations, or third parties proposing to provide direct services or assistance to residents on tribal lands should include in their applications a resolution, a letter, affidavit, or other documentation, as appropriate, that certifies that the applicant has the legal authority from the tribe(s) to implement the proposed project on tribal lands. In those instances when an organization or consortium of tribes applies for a grant on behalf of a tribe or multiple specific tribes, the application should include appropriate legal documentation, as described above, from all tribes that would receive services or assistance under the grant. A consortium of tribes for which existing consortium bylaws allow action without support from all tribes in the consortium (i.e., without an authorizing resolution or comparable legal documentation from each tribal governing body) may submit, instead, a copy of its consortium bylaws with the application.

## **7. Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status**

Applicants are to disclose whether they are currently designated high-risk by another federal grant making agency. This includes any status requiring additional oversight by the federal agency due to past programmatic or financial concerns. If an applicant is designated high-risk by another federal grant making agency, you must email the following information to [OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov) at the time of application submission:

- The federal agency that currently designated the applicant as high-risk.
- Date the applicant was designated high-risk.
- The high-risk point of contact name, phone number, and email address, from that federal agency.
- Reasons for the high-risk status

OJP seeks this information to ensure appropriate federal oversight of any grant award. Disclosing this high-risk information does not disqualify any organization from receiving an OJP award. However, additional grant oversight may be included, if necessary, in award documentation.

## **8. Additional Attachments**

Please provide the following:

- An organizational chart of the FTCOE and all proposed collaborators.
- A narrative supporting each organizational chart.

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<sup>6</sup> See 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f).

- Two short (three-to-four pages each) Technology Transition Workshop proposals demonstrating the knowledge base of the applicant.

**a. Applicant disclosure of pending applications<sup>7</sup>**

Applicants are to disclose whether they have pending applications for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation. The disclosure should include both direct applications for federal funding (e.g., applications to federal agencies) and indirect applications for such funding (e.g., applications to State agencies that will subaward federal funds).

OJP seeks this information to help avoid any inappropriate duplication of funding. Leveraging multiple funding sources in a complementary manner to implement comprehensive programs or projects is encouraged and is not seen as inappropriate duplication.

Applicants that have pending applications as described above are to provide the following information about pending applications submitted within the last 12 months:

- The federal or State funding agency.
- The solicitation name/project name.
- The point of contact information at the applicable funding agency.

<b>Federal or State Funding Agency</b>	<b>Solicitation Name/Project Name</b>	<b>Name/Phone/E-mail for Point of Contact at Funding Agency</b>
DOJ/COPS	COPS Hiring Program	Jane Doe, 202/000-0000; jane.doe@usdoj.gov
HHS/ Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration	Drug Free Communities Mentoring Program/ North County Youth Mentoring Program	John Doe, 202/000-0000; john.doe@hhs.gov

Applicants should include the table as a separate attachment to their application. The file should be named “Disclosure of Pending Applications.”

Applicants that do not have pending applications as described above are to include a statement to this effect in the separate attachment page (e.g., “[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not have pending applications submitted within the last 12 months for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include

<sup>7</sup> Typically, the applicant is not the principal investigator; rather, the applicant, most frequently, is the institution, organization, or company in which the principal investigator is employed.

requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation.”).

**b. Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity**

If a proposal involves research and/or evaluation, regardless of the proposal’s other merits, in order to receive funds, the applicant must demonstrate research/evaluation independence, including appropriate safeguards to ensure research/evaluation objectivity and integrity, both in this proposal and as it may relate to the applicant’s other current or prior related projects. This documentation may be included as an attachment to the application which addresses BOTH i. and ii. below.

- i. For purposes of this solicitation, applicants must document research and evaluation independence and integrity by including, at a minimum, one of the following two items:
  - a. A specific assurance that the applicant has reviewed its proposal to identify any research integrity issues (including all principal investigators and sub-recipients) and it has concluded that the design, conduct, or reporting of research and evaluation funded by NIJ grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts will not be biased by any personal or financial conflict of interest on the part of part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients responsible for the research and evaluation or on the part of the applicant organization;

OR

- b. A specific listing of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that the applicant has identified in relation to this proposal. These conflicts could be either personal (related to specific staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients) or organizational (related to the applicant or any subgrantee organization). Examples of potential investigator (or other personal) conflict situations may include, but are not limited to, those in which an investigator would be in a position to evaluate a spouse’s work product (actual conflict), or an investigator would be in a position to evaluate the work of a former or current colleague (potential apparent conflict). With regard to potential organizational conflicts of interest, as one example, generally an organization could not be given a grant to evaluate a project if that organization had itself provided substantial prior technical assistance to that specific project or a location implementing the project (whether funded by OJP or other sources), as the organization in such an instance would appear to be evaluating the effectiveness of its own prior work. The key is whether a reasonable person understanding all of the facts would be able to have confidence that the results of any research or evaluation project are objective and reliable. Any outside personal or financial interest that casts doubt on that objectivity and reliability of an evaluation or research product is a problem and must be disclosed.
- ii. In addition, for purposes of this solicitation applicants must address the issue of possible mitigation of research integrity concerns by including, at a minimum, one of the following two items:

- a. If an applicant reasonably believes that no potential personal or organizational conflicts of interest exist, then the applicant should provide a brief narrative explanation of how and why it reached that conclusion. Applicants **MUST** also include an explanation of the specific processes and procedures that the applicant will put in place to identify and eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) potential personal or financial conflicts of interest on the part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients for this particular project, should that be necessary during the grant period. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard could include organizational codes of ethics/conduct or policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest.

OR

- b. If the applicant has identified specific personal or organizational conflicts of interest in its proposal during this review, the applicant must propose a specific and robust mitigation plan to address conflicts noted above. At a minimum, the plan must include specific processes and procedures that the applicant will put in place to eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) potential personal or financial conflicts of interest on the part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients for this particular project, should that be necessary during the grant period. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard could include organizational codes of ethics/conduct or policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. There is no guarantee that the plan, if any, will be accepted as proposed.

Considerations in assessing research and evaluation independence and integrity will include, but are not be limited to, the adequacy of the applicant's efforts to identify factors that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the proposed staff and/or the organization in carrying out the research, development, or evaluation activity; and the adequacy of the applicant's existing or proposed remedies to control any such factors.

## **9. Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire**

In accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements as set out at [2 C.F.R. 200.205](#), federal agencies must have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive a federal award. To facilitate part of this risk evaluation, **all** applicants (other than an individual) are to download, complete, and submit this [form](#).

## **10. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**

All applicants must complete this information. Applicants that expend any funds for lobbying activities are to provide the detailed information requested on the form Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). Applicants that do not expend any funds for lobbying activities are to enter "N/A" in the text boxes for item 10 ("a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant" and "b. Individuals Performing Services").

## How to Apply

Applicants must register in, and submit applications through Grants.gov, a “one-stop storefront” to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays. Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, **processing delays may occur, and it can take several weeks** for first-time registrants to receive confirmation and a user password. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

NIJ strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) regarding this solicitation. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be automatically notified.

**Note on Attachments.** Grants.gov has two categories of files for attachments: mandatory and optional. OJP receives all files attached in both categories. Please insure all required documents are attached in the mandatory category.

**Note on File Names and File Types:** Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in names of attachment files. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to reject any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to forward successfully submitted applications to OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS).

Characters	Special Characters		
Upper case (A – Z)	Parenthesis ( )	Curly braces { }	Square brackets [ ]
Lower case (a – z)	Ampersand (&)	Tilde (~)	Exclamation point (!)
Underscore ( _ )	Comma ( , )	Semicolon ( ; )	Apostrophe ( ‘ )
Hyphen ( - )	At sign ( @ )	Number sign ( # )	Dollar sign ( \$ )
Space	Percent sign ( % )	Plus sign ( + )	Equal sign ( = )
Period ( . )	<b>When using the ampersand (&amp;) in XML, applicants must use the “&amp;amp;” format.</b>		

**GMS does not accept executable file types as application attachments.** These disallowed file types include, but are not limited to, the following extensions: “.com,” “.bat,” “.exe,” “.vbs,” “.cfg,” “.dat,” “.db,” “.dbf,” “.dll,” “.ini,” “.log,” “.ora,” “.sys,” and “.zip.” GMS may reject applications with files that use these extensions. It is important to allow time to change the type of file(s) if the application is rejected.

All applicants are required to complete the following steps:

OJP may not make a federal award to an applicant organization until the applicant organization has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. Individual applicants must comply with all Grants.gov requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the federal awarding agency is ready to make a federal award, the

federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

Individual applicants should search Grants.gov for a funding opportunity for which individuals are eligible to apply. Use the Funding Opportunity Number (FON) to register. Complete the registration form at <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/IndCPRegister> to create a username and password. Individual applicants should complete all steps except 1, 2 and 4.

- 1. Acquire a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.** In general, the Office of Management and Budget requires that all applicants (other than individuals) for federal funds include a DUNS number in their applications for a new award or a supplement to an existing award. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and differentiating entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Call Dun and Bradstreet at 866-705-5711 to obtain a DUNS number or apply online at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). A DUNS number is usually received within 1-2 business days.
- 2. Acquire registration with the System for Award Management (SAM).** SAM is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. OJP requires all applicants (other than individuals) for federal financial assistance to maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants must be registered in SAM to successfully register in Grants.gov. Applicants must **update or renew their SAM registration annually** to maintain an active status. SAM registration and renewal can take as long as 10 business days to complete.

Applications cannot be successfully submitted in Grants.gov until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours. OJP recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

- 3. Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password.** Complete the AOR profile on Grants.gov and create a username and password. The applicant organization's DUNS number must be used to complete this step. For more information about the registration process, go to [www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html). Individuals registering with Grants.gov should go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/individual-registration.html>.
- 4. Acquire confirmation for the AOR from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC).** The E-Biz POC at the applicant organization must log into Grants.gov to confirm the applicant organization's AOR. The E-Biz POC will need the Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN) password obtained when registering with SAM to complete this step. Note that an organization can have more than one AOR.
- 5. Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov.** Use the following identifying information when searching for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this solicitation is 16.560, titled "National Institute

of Justice Research, Evaluation, and Development Project Grants” and the funding opportunity number is NIJ-2016-9087.

- 6. Submit a valid application consistent with this solicitation by following the directions in Grants.gov.** Within 24-48 hours after submitting the electronic application, the applicant should receive two notifications from Grants.gov. The first will confirm the receipt of the application and the second will state whether the application has been successfully validated, or rejected due to errors, with an explanation. It is possible to first receive a message indicating that the application is received and then receive a rejection notice a few minutes or hours later. Submitting well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** OJP urges applicants to submit applications **at least 72 hours prior** to the application due date to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

Click [here](#) for further details on DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

#### **Note: Duplicate Applications**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, NIJ will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. See Note on File Names and File Types under [How To Apply](#).

#### **Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues**

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must contact the [Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline](#) or the [SAM Help Desk](#) (Federal Service Desk) to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. Then the applicant must e-mail the NIJ contact identified in the Contact Information section on page 2 **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. The e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and include a timeline of the applicant’s submission efforts, the complete grant application, the applicant’s DUNS number, and any Grants.gov Help Desk or SAM tracking number(s). **Note: NIJ does not automatically approve requests.** After the program office reviews the submission, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to validate the reported technical issues, OJP will inform the applicant whether the request to submit a late application has been approved or denied. If OJP determines that the applicant failed to follow all required procedures, which resulted in an untimely application submission, OJP will deny the applicant’s request to submit their application.

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- Failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time. (SAM registration and renewal can take as long as 10 business days to complete. The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours.)
- Failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its website.
- Failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation.

- Technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls.

**Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP funding Web page at <http://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.**

## **E. Application Review Information**

### **Selection Criteria**

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers using the following review criteria.

**Statement of the Problem** (Understanding of the problem and its importance) – 10%

1. Demonstrated understanding of the problem.
2. Demonstrated awareness of the state of current research.

**Project Design and Implementation** (Quality and technical merit) – 50%

1. Soundness of methods and analytic and technical approach to addressing the stated aim(s) of the proposed project.
2. Feasibility of proposed project.
3. Awareness of potential pitfalls of proposed project design and feasibility of proposed actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
4. Innovation and creativity (when appropriate).

**Potential Impact** – 20%

Potential for a significant scientific or technical advance(s) that will improve criminal/juvenile justice in the United States, such as:

- Potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated criminal/juvenile justice problem.
- Potential for innovative solution to address (all or a significant part of) the stated criminal/juvenile justice problem.
- Perceived potential for commercialization and/or implementation of a new technology.
- Potential for significant advances/impact in the field.

**Capabilities/Competencies** (Capabilities, demonstrated productivity, and experience of the applicant organization and proposed project staff) – 20%

1. Qualifications and experience of proposed project staff (that is, the principal investigator, any and all co-principal investigators, and all other individuals (and organizations) identified in the application (regardless of “investigator” status) who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposal).
2. Demonstrated ability of the applicant organization to manage the effort.
3. Relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff (including the applicant organization) and the scope of the proposed project.

## **Budget**

Peer reviewers will consider and may comment on the following additional items in the context of scientific and technical merit.

1. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
2. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
3. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.
4. Proposed budget alignment with proposed project activities.

## **Plan for Dissemination to Broader Audiences (if applicable to the proposed project)**

Peer reviewers may comment—in the context of scientific and technical merit—on the proposed plan (if any) to produce or to make available to broader interested audiences, such as criminal/juvenile justice practitioners or policymakers, summary information from the planned scholarly products of the project.

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## **Review Process**

OJP is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for awarding grants. NIJ reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with the solicitation.

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. For purposes of assessing whether applicants have met basic minimum requirements, OJP screens applications for compliance with specified program requirements to help determine which applications should proceed to further consideration for award. Although program requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP grant programs:

- Applications must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant.
- Applications must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- Applications must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.

- Applications must include all items designated as “critical elements.”
- Applicants will be checked against the System for Award Management.

For a list of critical elements, see “What an Application Should Include” under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

NIJ may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications meeting basic minimum requirements on technical merit using the solicitation’s selection criteria. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is not a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. A peer review panel will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements.

OJP reviews applications for potential discretionary awards to evaluate the risks posed by applicants before they receive an award. This review may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Financial stability and fiscal integrity.
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Financial Guide.
3. History of performance.
4. Reports and findings from audits.
5. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients.
6. Proposed costs to determine if the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs, and whether those costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable federal cost principles and agency regulations.

All final award decisions will be made by the Director of the National Institute of Justice. Peer reviewers’ ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, although their views are considered carefully. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, planned scholarly products, proposed budgets, past performance (including scholarly products) under prior NIJ and OJP awards, research independence and integrity, strategic priorities, and available funding when making awards.

## **F. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **Federal Award Notices**

OJP sends award notification by email through GMS to the individuals listed in the application as the point of contact and the authorizing official (E-Biz POC and AOR). The email notification includes detailed instructions on how to access and view the award documents, and how to

accept the award in GMS. GMS automatically issues the notifications at 9:00 p.m. eastern time on the award date (by September 30, 2016). Recipients will be required to login; accept any outstanding assurances and certifications on the award; designate a financial point of contact; and review, sign, and accept the award. The award acceptance process involves physical signature of the award document by the authorized representative and the scanning of the fully-executed award document to OJP.

### **Administrative, National Policy, and other Legal Requirements**

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the agency-approved project proposal and budget, the recipient must comply with award terms and conditions, and other legal requirements, that are included in the award, incorporated into the award by reference, or are otherwise applicable to the award. OJP strongly encourages prospective applicants to review the information pertaining to these requirements **prior** to submitting an application. To assist applicants and recipients in accessing and reviewing this information, OJP has placed it on its [Solicitation Requirements](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Please note in particular the following two forms, which applicants must submit in GMS prior to the receipt of any award funds, as each details legal requirements with which applicants must provide specific assurances and certifications of compliance. Applicants may view these forms in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#) and are strongly encouraged to review and consider them carefully prior to making an application for OJP grant funds.

- [Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements.](#)
- [Standard Assurances.](#)

Upon grant approval, OJP electronically transmits (via GMS) the award document to the prospective award recipient. In addition to other award information, the award document contains award terms and conditions that specify national policy requirements<sup>8</sup> with which recipients of federal funding must comply; uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements; and program-specific terms and conditions required based on applicable program (statutory) authority or requirements set forth in OJP solicitations and program announcements. For example, certain efforts may call for special requirements, terms, or conditions relating to intellectual property, data/information-sharing or -access, or information security; or audit requirements, expenditures and milestones, or publications and/or press releases.

OJP also may place additional terms and conditions on an award based on its risk assessment of the applicant, or for other reasons it determines necessary to fulfill the goals and objectives of the program.

Prospective applicants may access and review the text of mandatory conditions OJP includes in all OJP awards, as well as the text of certain other conditions, such as administrative conditions, via the [Mandatory Award Terms and Conditions](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

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<sup>8</sup> See generally 2 C.F.R. 200.300 (provides a general description of national policy requirements typically applicable to recipients of Federal awards, including the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA)).

As stated above, NIJ expects that it will make any award from this solicitation in the form of a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreement awards include standard “federal involvement” conditions that describe the general allocation of responsibility for execution of the funded program. Generally stated, under cooperative agreement awards, responsibility for the day-to-day conduct of the funded project rests with the recipient in implementing the funded and approved proposal and budget, and the award terms and conditions. Responsibility for oversight and redirection of the project, if necessary, rests with NIJ.

In addition to any “federal involvement” condition(s), OJP cooperative agreement awards include a special condition specifying certain reporting requirements required in connection with conferences, meetings, retreats, seminars, symposium, training activities, or similar events funded under the award, consistent with OJP policy and guidance on “conference” approval, planning, and reporting.

### **General Information About Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements**

Recipients must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements. Applicants should anticipate that NIJ will require recipients to use a version of the non-budgetary components of the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR) template/format for progress reports, appropriately modified for NIJ research awards. General information on RPPRs may be found at [www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rppr/](http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rppr/). Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent.

Special Reporting requirements may be required by OJP depending on the statutory, legislative or administrative requirements of the recipient or the program.

### **Required Data Sets and Associated Files and Documentation**

As discussed earlier, NIJ requires recipients of an award under this solicitation to submit to NACJD all data sets that result in whole or in part from the work funded by NIJ, along with associated files and any documentation necessary to allow for future efforts by others to reproduce the project’s findings and/or to extend the scientific value of the data set through secondary analysis. All data sets and necessary documentation are to be submitted 90 days prior to the end of the project period. For more information, see the “Program Narrative” section of [What an Application Should Include](#).

## **G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

For Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s), see the title page.

For contact information for Grants.gov, see the title page.

## H. Other Information

### Provide Feedback to OJP

To assist OJP in improving its application and award processes, we encourage applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review/peer review process. Provide feedback to [OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov).

**IMPORTANT:** This e-mail is for feedback and suggestions only. Replies are not sent from this mailbox. If you have specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation, you must directly contact the appropriate number or e-mail listed on the front of this solicitation document. These contacts are provided to help ensure that you can directly reach an individual who can address your specific questions in a timely manner.

If you are interested in being a reviewer for other OJP grant applications, please e-mail your résumé to [ojppeerreview@lmsolas.com](mailto:ojppeerreview@lmsolas.com). The OJP Solicitation Feedback email account will not forward your résumé. Note: Neither you nor anyone else from your organization can be a peer reviewer in a competition in which you or your organization have submitted an application.

# Application Checklist

## Forensic Technology Center of Excellence

This application checklist has been created to assist in developing an application.

### What an Applicant Should Do:

#### *Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire a DUNS Number (see page 24)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 24)

#### *To Register with Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 24)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 24)

#### *To Find Funding Opportunity:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 24)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download Funding Opportunity and Application Package
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sign up for Grants.gov [email](#) notifications (optional) (see page 23)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read OJP policy and guidance on “conference” approval, planning, and reporting available at [ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm](http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm) (see page 10)

#### *After Application Submission, Receive Grants.gov Email Notifications That:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ (1) Application has been received
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see page 25)

#### *If no Grants.gov receipt, and validation or error notifications are received:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Please refer to the section: Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues (see page 25)

### General Requirements:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review the [Solicitation Requirements](#) in the OJP Funding Resource Center.

### What an Application Should Include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 11)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Project Abstract (if applicable) (see page 11)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Program Narrative (see page 12)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Detail Worksheet (see page 17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Narrative (see page 17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status (see page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Attachments
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 20)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see page 21)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Compensation Waiver request and justification (if applicable) (see page 9)